

TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES

Goals

These goals pertain to all forms of surface, air, and water transportation and all forms of utility or resource transportation corridors.

Support Plan Recommendations. Provide for a transportation system needed to implement plan recommendations and integrate it with other area-wide transportation needs.

Minimize Costs. Provide for a transportation system that minimizes possible long-range costs in all aspects of design, construction, operation, and maintenance and which avoids unnecessary duplication of facilities.

Minimize Adverse Impacts. Provide for a transportation system that has minimal adverse impact on the environment, scenic qualities, historic and cultural resources, and subsistence resources and activities.

Promote Efficient Land and Resource Use. Provide for a transportation system that uses land and energy resources efficiently and encourages compact, efficient development patterns.

Ensure Public Safety. Provide for a transportation system that has high standards of public safety.

Management Guidelines

A. Identification of Potential Transportation Routes. No major new transportation routes are necessary to support the land use designations made in this plan. Three possible corridors have previously been identified for the Northwest Area: the Western Access Corridor from Prospect to the Kougark Road, the Chicago Creek coal-mining-area to Kotzebue route, and the Northern Access Corridor to the Lik mineral deposit. No applications have been made for any of these routes. However, authorization for activities that could foreclose future development of these corridors should not be granted. If an application is made, DNR authorizations will be consistent with the policies and guidelines of this plan. In addition, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities may require an evaluation of social,

economic, and environmental effects of the transportation routes in coordination with affected communities and coastal districts. To the extent feasible and prudent, DNR will not issue permits for the construction of major transportation routes until final decisions are made on the feasibility of these routes.

B. Access Plans for Land Offerings or Resource Development Projects. Before offering land for disposal or initiating a resource development project, DNR will work with DOT&PF to identify access routes and responsibilities for design, construction, and maintenance of proposed transportation facilities. Access plans will be developed in consultation with affected local governments, coastal management districts, and land owners.

C. Joint Use and Consolidation of Surface Access. Joint use and consolidation of surface access routes and facilities will be encouraged wherever feasible and prudent. Surface access should be sited and designed to accommodate future development and to avoid unnecessary duplication. The feasibility of using an existing route or facility should be evaluated before authorizing a new one.

D. Protection of Hydrologic Systems. Transportation facilities will, to the extent feasible and prudent, be located to avoid significantly impacting the quality or quantity of adjacent surface waters or detracting from recreational use of these waters. The following guidelines generally apply, although site-specific exceptions may be necessary:

1. Minimizing the Number of Stream Crossings. The number of stream crossings should be minimized. When they are necessary to construct a road, the stream crossings should be made where the stream channel is stable and should traverse the channel in the most direct manner practical.

2. Minimizing Construction in Wetlands. Construction in wetlands, poorly drained areas, and floodplains should be minimized and existing drainage patterns maintained. Culverts should be installed where necessary to enable free movement of water.

3. Properly Designing Bridges and Culverts.

Bridges and culverts should be large enough and positioned properly to avoid altering the direction and velocity of stream flow or interfering with migrating or spawning activities of fish, in accordance with A.S. 16, and with movement of wildlife. Bridges intended for permanent use should be large enough to accommodate at least the 25-year peak discharge (where known). Bridges and culverts should provide adequate clearance for boat, pedestrian, horse, and large game passage whenever these uses occur or are anticipated to occur at significant levels.

4. Rehabilitating Disturbed Stream Banks.

Disturbed stream banks should be recontoured, revegetated, or other protective measures should be taken to prevent soil erosion into adjacent waters.

5. Crossing Frozen Streams and Lakes. Where allowed, snow ramps, snow bridges, or other methods of access across frozen streams and lakes should be used to avoid cutting, eroding, or degrading of banks.

E. Protection of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Important fish and wildlife habitats such as riparian areas, wildlife movement corridors, important wintering or calving areas, and threatened or endangered species habitat will be avoided when siting transportation routes unless no feasible and prudent alternative routing exists. Location of routes and timing of construction should be determined in consultation with the Department of Fish and Game (DF&G) and affected coastal districts. See also *Fish and Wildlife Habitat* Guideline H, page 2-8, to avoid conflicts with traditional uses of fish and game.

F. Road Pullouts. Where road corridors come in contact with streams, habitat corridors, or other areas of potential public use, sufficient acreage should be retained in public ownership to accommodate public access, provide for public health and safety, and allow for public use. The size and location of pullouts should be determined in consultation with the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, DOT&PF, DF&G, and appropriate coastal districts and local communities.

G. Timber Salvage From Rights-of-Way. All timber having high value for commercial or per-

sonal use should be salvaged from rights-of-way cleared for construction.

H. Off-Road Vehicle Activity. Most off-road vehicle activity on state lands does not require a permit. A permit generally is not required to operate a snowmobile, jeep, pick-up, weasel, or similar vehicle on most state land. However, by statute and regulation, off-road use of vehicles such as snowmachines, jeeps, and small all-terrain vehicles may require a permit on lands designated by DNR as 'special use' lands, for crossing anadromous fish streams, and on specially designated areas such as state park system lands, fish and game sanctuaries, refuges, or critical habitat areas. Off-road vehicle restrictions are made for each particular area. In addition, use of larger vehicles will require a permit on any state lands.

When permits are issued for off-road vehicle use under 11 AAC 96, or in specially designated areas, they will require that disturbance of soils, vegetation, fish and wildlife populations, drainage patterns, and water quality be minimized. Operations should either be scheduled when adequate snow and ground frost are available to protect the ground surface, or should require the use of low ground pressure vehicles, the avoidance of problem areas, or other techniques to protect areas likely to be damaged. Existing roads and trails should be utilized to minimize impacts to the surface. Before permits are issued, the land manager will consult with affected agencies.

Off-road vehicle permits generally should not be granted for vehicle use in important wildlife habitats during sensitive periods. If such vehicle activity is essential, is consistent with the appropriate coastal management plan policies, and no other practical alternative exists, it should be allowed only as an occasional use. This policy will be applied only when significant wildlife populations are likely to be present. DF&G will be consulted to help identify important habitat areas and sensitive periods that might warrant this restriction.

I. Roadless Areas. To protect particular resources or forms of resource use, some areas may be designated roadless by the state or future local governments, and managed to exclude construction of roads. These areas would be designated during an interagency decision process, such as

the disposal review process or transportation planning process, conducted with public participation.

J. Other Design Standards. For other guidelines that affect the design of transportation structures, see DOT&PF's preconstruction guidelines.

K. Siting Utilities. Settlement support facilities, including generation and transmission structures or cables and buried sewage and water lines, will be sited to minimize adverse impacts on other valuable resources or uses. Appropriate authorizations should be in compliance with DEC regulations.

L. Other Guidelines Affecting Transportation. Several other guidelines may affect transportation. See the following sections of this chapter:

- Coordination and public notice
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Forestry
- Grazing
- Heritage resources
- Materials
- Public access
- Public and commercial recreation resources
- Settlement
- Stream corridors and instream flow
- Subsistence activities and traditional uses
- Subsurface resources
- Trail management
- Wetlands management